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THE CHOLERA,

(11)

AND

ITS CONSEQUENCES.

AN ADDRESS, OCCASIONED BY THE DEATH OF
MISS ———, WHO WAS SUDDENLY REMOVED
BY THE PREVALENT EPIDEMIC,
ON SEPT. 2, 1832.

“ We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen.”

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following Address was occasioned by an affecting circumstance which occurred in the house of the minister by whom it was delivered. A relative, at the time an inmate of his family, was removed by the present mysterious disease, after a few hours' suffering: her illness commenced in the afternoon of one day, and terminated fatally on the morning of the next. He attempted, in the following Address to his congregation, a serious improvement of so solemn an event. It was thought by some that, if printed in a cheap form, it might be rendered useful from its bearing so directly upon the circumstances of the present season. With this view it was offered to "The Religious Tract Society," the Committee of which immediately consented to adopt it, and to circulate it as one of their publications. To this Society the deceased contributed, and by the occasional circulation of its tracts sometimes "spoke" to others while living; by her death she

contributes to it in another form, and "*being dead,*" it may be said that, by it, "*she yet speaketh.*" The following attempt to interpret the voice of Providence, is now devoutly commended to the blessing of that God, who has graciously promised to accept the humblest service, and who, through the co-operation of his Spirit, can accomplish the greatest effects by the feeblest instrumentality.

THE CHOLERA,

AND

ITS CONSEQUENCES.

“ Behold at evening-tide trouble; and before the morning he is not.”—ISAIAH xvii. 14.

“ This night thy soul shall be required of thee.”—LUKE xii. 20.

THESE two passages, taken together, afford us a complete view of the nature and consequences of sudden death—especially of that awful form of it, which at present is so frequent, from the ravages of the “pestilence that walketh in darkness.” Of this solemn event the words just read present to our contemplation *both* aspects—that which it bears towards this world, and that which it bears towards the next. The passage from the prophet describes what sudden death is, as it is seen by man; the passage from the evangelist describes what it is, as it is seen by God and by spiritual

natures. The first confines our attention to its accidents and circumstances; the second penetrates, so to speak, its very essence, unfolds its solemnity, and carries us in thought to its infinite results. The first shows what death is as it affects the body; the second what it is as it affects the soul. The first excites sympathy for survivors; the second, solicitude for the departed:—or, if *both* are viewed in relation to the individual, the first awakens concern for his sufferings; the second, anxiety for his endless and changeless state. The one is death as we, who are upon earth, see it and know it; the other is death, as it is seen and known both by the “saved” in heaven, and by the “lost” in hell: they have had *their* souls required of them, and, remembering what *that* is, they have learned to regard that as the only thing which gives, to what we call death, importance and solemnity.

In the following observations, I shall endeavour, —

1. *To illustrate the principal ideas suggested by these two passages considered as one, or as relating to the same event.*

II. *To deduce from them certain general principles by way of practical improvement.*

May the great Head of the church, “who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we may live together with him,” give unto us, at this time, the aids of his promised Spirit, that we may so speak and so hear as that, if at “evening-tide,” *this very day*, “trouble” should come to any one of us;—if, “before the morning,” it should be said, “he is not;” it may also be added, with faith and gratitude, “he is not, *for the Lord hath taken him.*”

I. *I shall endeavour to illustrate the principal ideas suggested by these two passages considered as one, or as relating to the same event.*

1. They imply, that at the beginning of the day all is well. “*At evening-tide trouble;*” previous to this, therefore, it was neither experienced nor anticipated. The day is supposed to open as many others had opened before; the members of the family arise invigorated and refreshed; they assemble together—they exchange the tokens of affection—they give to the usual inquiries the usual reply;—“They laid themselves down

and slept, they awoke, because God caused them to dwell in safety." "No evil has befallen them, nor has any plague come nigh their dwelling." From the thief and the murderer, from the devouring flame and the wasting pestilence, they have sustained no injury. They unite in domestic worship, giving thanks unto the God of their life; they commend and commit each other to his providential protection; and they enter upon the duties which he has made theirs, with those feelings of cheerfulness and security, which it is natural to indulge from the mercies of God having been so long enjoyed, and so often repeated. Thus the day opens, and thus it advances; hour succeeds to hour, duty to duty, and enjoyment to enjoyment. Every thing presents the same appearance which it presented yesterday—which has become so familiar as to be naturally expected, and is almost imagined to be incapable of change. There is nothing to excite suspicion that the day will in any circumstance be distinguished from others,—as to its being the last which some of them are ever to see, the thought never occurs—or occurs to be dismissed—dismissed, with the

admission in words, that it might so happen, but with a sort of secret persuasion that it certainly will not.

2. Another idea suggested is that of *sudden change* : “at evening-tide trouble.” The domestic scene is supposed to be darkened and overshadowed in a moment. “Trouble” enters, in one or other of its many shapes. We may conceive of it as coming in the form of that terrible disease which at present prevails to such an unparalleled extent. All now is agitation and alarm, where security and tranquillity reigned before. There is “trouble” to *many* ;—trouble to the *individual sufferer* ; agony and anguish from intense, complicated, positive pain. There is trouble to *immediate connections* ; mental distress, from hurry, surprise, consternation ;—from ignorance of what is to be done, or done first ; from anxiety for the arrival of physicians—for their opinion—their successive reports—their positive announcements ;—from the sight of what cannot be relieved either by the suggestions of science, or the efforts of affection. There is trouble to *attendants* ; to those who witness and bewail what they would

willingly remove;—trouble to *friends*, who extensively and deeply sympathize with those that suffer;—and, in many cases, there may be trouble far more terrible than any of these; there may be the “wounded spirit” added to the agonized body—mental despair as well as physical distress—the *first* pains of the next state meeting and mingling with the *last* of this.

“At *evening-tide* trouble.” Calamity may be aggravated by the *period* at which it occurs. There was something, doubtless, additionally appalling in the destruction of the first-born of the Egyptians, from the time in which the judgment was inflicted. The angel of death went forth invested with darkness to his mission of slaughter; the inhabitants of the land were aroused from their sleep to become sensible of their loss; “at *midnight*” there arose from Egypt “an exceeding and bitter cry,” “for there was not a house in which there was not one dead.” “At *evening-tide* trouble;” at that period, when men seem to have passed safely through the dangers of the day, and to have got *beyond* them; when the brow of care begins to relax, and the hand of

labour to be still; when the resorts of business are about to be closed, and its anxieties forsaken; when the heart expands and softens, and begins to prepare itself for calm enjoyment and domestic pleasures; when the active anticipate rest, and the studious relaxation;—then—*just then*—when all the felicities of life seem ready to be enjoyed, and men are eager and ready to enjoy them—behold “trouble” comes; “instead of mirth, heaviness;” “the fire of burning, and the bitter cup;” “lamentation, and mourning, and woe.”

3. Another idea suggested is *the rapidity with which the disease advances*. “At evening-tide trouble, and *before morning* he is not.” Other diseases are often long and lingering; “Thou makest me to possess months of vanity, and *wearisome nights* are appointed to me;” in the present instance, however, hardly *one* night is supposed thus to be passed:—nor *is* it thus passed; such a night is not “wearisome” in the usual sense of the word—not one that appears long and tedious, and in which men wish and watch for the morning: the sufferer himself soon becomes unconscious and insensible—time, its

advance, and its divisions, are to him *nothing* ; relatives and attendants are too much absorbed and occupied to notice its progress ; the very light of heaven penetrates the chamber long before it is observed ; they suddenly become sensible of its presence, and are actually startled at the discovery—they at first feel something like alarm, and then a vague recollection of the period that has elapsed since the commencement of their calamity. Instead of “*longing* for the day,” they would rather arrest and retard it, for they soon suspect that by the time of its perfect appearance, *that* will have occurred which they dread to realize ; their apprehensions of which they hesitate, perhaps, to acknowledge to each other ; and the certainty of which they would willingly conceal even from themselves. “At evening-tide trouble, and *before morning* he is not.”

4. The next idea is, *the termination of suffering and of suspense*—“before morning *he is not.*” “He is not ;” remarkable expression ! *that* which really constituted the friend or the relative is gone ; so far as this world is concerned, there is no longer any such being ; we speak of death as

removal, as *departure*—the departure of *him* that dies—*his* removal, who is now “no more ;” that which continues with us is *not* he—not the individual ; we speak of it as a *thing*, not as a *person* ; we call it “the remains,” “the body,” but not he *himself* who was so lately the object of our veneration or respect. These “remains,” or that “body” may be loved, because, while animated by the departed, they were to us, in a manner, *himself* ; they were that, through whose voice and eye we heard and beheld him ; that, by means of which we became acquainted with his sentiments, and towards which we expressed our affection ; but, now, he is not there,—“he is not,”—he has ceased to be, in relation to all the ends and purposes of the present existence. “Man giveth up the ghost, and where is he ?” “Thou changest his countenance and sendest him away.” “Then doth the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit returneth to God who gave it.”

5. The idea that next succeeds, is *the requirement made at the bar of the Eternal*. That, which in relation to time we call death, is, in relation to

eternity, God requiring the soul ; “this night, *thy soul shall be required of thee.*”

Reflect on the *subject* of this requirement,—“the soul.” An account is to be rendered, *not* of what you are so willing to take account of now, for the satisfaction of your selfishness ; or to give an account of to others, for the gratification of your vanity ; not, of your high birth, or your splendid connections, your elegant mansions, or beautiful domains,—your success in business,—your elevation in the world,—your acquisitions in literature,—or your masses of money. All these, indeed, will have to be accounted for, but the *things themselves* will not be required ; you will pass into eternity *without* them ; *there*, importance is attached, not to their possession, but their use ; they are extrinsic to yourself ; you can be what you are,—a thinking, feeling, immortal spirit,—separated from them all. That, however, which God will require at death *is* yourself—the essential substance of your being, in whatever moral state it may be at death.

Reflect on the *nature* of this requirement. The

soul is to be given up into the hand of God, to be examined by him as to its state, and to be disposed of by him according to its condition. He will interrogate the man, as to the manner in which it has been treated ; whether he felt the importance of possessing it, and the responsibility of being intrusted with its care and its safety ; whether he sought the salvation of the soul, rather than the indulgence of the senses, and whether it was secured in the appointed way, by an act of faith in the atoning Sacrifice, dependance on the aids of the sanctifying Spirit, and the careful cultivation of holy obedience. He will ascertain whether the soul was thus the principal object of the man's solicitude ; whether he controlled its thoughts, regulated its desires, and curbed its propensities ; whether he not only taught it to despise the earth, but to be familiar with heaven ; whether he kept it tending *towards* heaven, by keeping it constantly in contact with "the things of the Spirit." God will inquire into all this ; he will ascertain whether it was attended to or neglected ; whether the man made his personal salvation his chief concern, or whether he lived as

if he had no soul;—none to be saved, none to be sanctified, none to be cared for, none to be required of him;—as if death were nothing *but* death, and judgment and eternity nothing at all.

Reflect on *Him who makes the requirement.* “*God* said unto him, This night thy soul shall be required of thee.” The words might be rendered, “this night *they shall require* thy soul,” that is, angels shall do it—angels good or bad—“ministering spirits” or apostate natures, who are supposed to take into their hands, immediately upon death, the souls respectively of the righteous and the wicked. The words would thus intimate that spiritual beings, looking upon an individual, and beholding him “ripe” for glory or for destruction, stand ready to receive him to themselves, and, at the Divine permission, under which alone they act, “*require*” him to surrender his soul into their custody, to be carried, like that of the poor but pious beggar, into “Abraham’s bosom,” or to be plunged, like that of the rich voluptuary, into the flames of hell. There is something awfully affecting in the thought of a human soul becoming thus subjected to the power of superior beings;

there is something, however, far more solemn and affecting in its coming within the *grasp of God*—coming under the control of *power* literally infinite and universally irresistible ; and, it is to be remarked, that, while we do *not* know that the first idea is true, as to what occurs at death, we *do* know that the second *is*. *God* will require the soul ; by him it was at first created, to him it is responsible, and to him it returns. This suggests the reflection of *the impossibility of escape*—the folly of supposing for a moment that we can ever deceive him by any subterfuge, equivocation, or concealment. It is impossible to elude his observation—impossible to pass beyond his power—impossible to blind his intelligence. *All* is known to him :—the state of every soul—the condition in which it lives here, and in which it departs hence ; how it has been cared for or neglected ; what it has loved and hated—forsaken and pursued—rejected and chosen. All is known to him. At the bar of the Eternal, the soul feels itself in a circle of light—light, flowing from the face of God—light, behind, before, above, beneath, around it ;—all is transparent, and all is

discovered ; it stands revealed to itself, either in that purity which results from being “washed in the blood of the Lamb,” or in that loathsomeness which results from the presence of unpardoned sin, and which *now* will adhere to it for ever. *God* will make the requirement, and from him nothing can be hid : he is at present “about our path, and about our bed, encompassing all our ways ;” “his eyes are as a flame of fire, searching into the inmost thoughts and recesses of the heart ;” “he has set our secret sins in the light of his countenance ;” and “will bring *every* thing into judgment—every *secret* thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil.”

Reflect on the *personality* of this requirement, “thy soul shall be required of *thee*.” The man, at the supreme tribunal, will feel *alone*—alone with God ; he will feel as if nothing existed but God and himself ; as if God’s eye saw nothing but him—as if it rested nowhere besides, but was just fixed with burning, steady, intense inquiry upon his naked spirit. In all the dealings between God and his creatures, when they are brought into positive contact, there is this overwhelming feeling

of individuality. It is so at the hour of death, when we enter eternity alone : it will be so at the day of judgment, even when we are surrounded with “ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands.” “Thy soul shall be required of thee.” There is a sense in which we must give an account of each other—the minister of his people, the parent of his child, the friend of his friend ; but the principal thing is, man, “*every man, giving an account of himself to God.*” The inquiry will be pointed and personal ; the voice of the Judge will seem to fall upon the ear of each individual as if there were none besides to whom it could be addressed.

6. The last idea suggested by the whole subject, is *the ultimate result*. An inquiry supposes an object ; examination and judgment imply determination and decision. The soul separated from the body and appearing before God, appears there only to be passed, by his righteous sentence, to its “*own place*”—its appropriate sphere of enjoyment or suffering. Every human spirit, as it is required of God and passes into eternity, is morally prepared for the one of two states ; it

is either "saved from wrath" by the "sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, and sanctified by the Spirit," and thus "fitted" for "entering into his joy," and for taking its place among "the spirits of just men made perfect;" or, by unbelief and impenitence—by worldly-mindedness—by sloth, or sensuality, or other forms of sin—it is "fitted" for nothing but for that place of despair and darkness, "prepared," originally, "for the devil and his angels." The consignment of each human soul to the one or the other of these abodes, is that *last* act which crowns and closes the whole train of successive circumstances to which we have referred. At evening-tide—trouble; by the morning—he is not; the soul is required, examined, judged, sentenced; and thus, in a few hours, an event, immeasurable in its magnitude, infinite in its consequences, and awful from its solemnity—is begun—continued—concluded. The mortal of yesterday is the immortal of to-day. The being then in a state of probation, is now in one in which probation is ended—in which the whole range of its perceptions and emotions, its interests and pursuits, has ceased to be affected

by “things seen and temporal,” and is entirely taken up with the “unseen and eternal.”

II. We are now *To deduce from the subject, thus illustrated, certain general principles and reflections by way of practical improvement.* I shall express each of these in the language of Scripture.

1. “*Man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward.*”—This is a general truth, clothed in sacred phraseology, in words which the Holy Ghost teacheth; a truth which we are ready to acknowledge, and—to forget. It does not mean that man is born to *nothing* but trouble, for this is obviously contrary to fact; man is born to delight and happiness as well as suffering; the same Being who has made him “subject to vanity,” has also given him all things “richly to enjoy.” Nor does it mean that man *was made* for trouble—that trouble, in the divine government, is an *end* of itself; man was originally made for happiness; the end proposed in his creation was the display of the divine glory, by his perfect assimilation to the Divine Image, and his constant participation of the divine beatitude. By the apostacy he

became exposed to death, and to all the evils introductory to death, and hence he is now born to trouble, though not at first created for it. But still, he is not born for it, as if God had any pleasure in its infliction considered by itself—no, it is a part of a kind and gracious economy, by which it is purposed that he shall be reminded of his moral condition, be taught to aspire after a better state, be driven from his attachments to a “world that is passing away,” and brought back to “the Shepherd and Bishop of his soul.” By man being born to trouble, we mean, that he is made constantly sensible of many wants and inconveniences—that his highest enjoyments are marred and mingled—that he is conscious of capacities, which nothing earthly is adequate to meet, and of desires and longings which are never satisfied—that he is exposed, at every point, to the shafts of affliction, and surrounded, on all sides, by the sources of sorrow—that these, when not piercing or oppressing him, are only *restrained*, and that therefore he is *liable*, at any moment, to the sudden eruptions of overwhelming calamity.

2. “*We know not what a day may bring forth.*”

—This is another general truth, expressed, like the former, in scriptural language, and to which its illustration has naturally brought us. Like the former also, it is a truth which we are ready to acknowledge, but willing to forget. We *do* forget it: the consequence is that we form plans, and indulge anticipations, and talk of the future, as if we were both omnipotent and immortal—as if we could do all things and feared nothing. Another consequence is, that when calamity comes—comes, as it often does, with unexpected advances and awful aspect, from the want of recollecting our *liability*, we are perhaps unprepared to meet it as we ought. It is imperative upon us, in a world like this, and especially in times like these, to recur, seriously and often, to this truth, “We know not what a day may bring forth.” For any thing *we* can tell, the angel of death may be now upon the wing—his bow may be bent and his aim taken—taken at us—to-morrow, it may be said with respect to us, in reference to this day, “at evening-tide there was trouble, and before morning *he was not*.” We, and all that concerns us, are constantly subject to the authority, and lie at

the disposal of a mighty power, over which we have no control. It is the happiness of the Christian to feel this ; to know that this power is upon his side ; exerts itself for his defence and protection ; and is animated and moved by love towards him, as immense and mighty as its strength. But we are speaking, at present, of man *as man* lying helpless under it. Whatever we are, and whatever we have, is *permitted*. We live *by sufferance* ; we enjoy *by sufferance* ; *by sufferance* we are in health, in affluence, or in comfort. Our mental capacities, our active powers, our prosperity and possessions—our relative connections and domestic joys—all are in the hands of Him who gave them without consulting us, and who, without consulting us, can take them away. In the morning, all may be well ; but—“ *we know not what a day may bring forth ;*” “ at evening-tide” we may be deprived of our reason, our health, our property, or our lives : He, “ who sent forth his word and created us,” may send forth his word again—“ trouble” may come, and “ death” may succeed it.

3. *It is appointed unto man once to die, and after*

death the judgment.”—Here is another general truth, arising from the subject, flowing naturally from the last, and clothed like both that have preceded, in God’s own language. It is *appointed* to us to die ; the event is certain and inevitable, though the period may be near or remote, and the means mild or violent. “One generation passeth away and another cometh ;” the species continues, but individuals die. Every generation *passeth*—*passeth* constantly, rapidly, universally ; it is the law under which existence is given, and under which it is held ; it is the law of all ranks, characters, and conditions ; wealth cannot purchase indemnity from death, nor power command it, nor wit nor science baffle or evade him. Even holiness itself is no security. The *church* dies as well as the world. The saint and the sinner are mingled together in society, and their ashes are mingled together in the grave. *There* are “the wicked who have ceased from troubling ;” there the righteous, “who served their generation by the will of God, and afterwards fell asleep ;” there are “the men who made the earth to tremble—the weary that are at rest,” and “the slave that is

free from his master ;” there are “ the mighty men, the men of war, the judge, the prophet, the prudent, and the ancient ; there the honourable men, the counsellor, the cunning artificer, and the eloquent orator ;” there “ the poor and the rich meet together ; the Lord is the Maker of them all.”

All this, however, would be nothing, or comparatively nothing, if this *were* all. There is something to succeed ;—“ *after* death, the judgment.” It is this which gives to the grave its terror, and to futurity its importance. It is something, certainly, to have to forsake earth and all that earth contains ; but it is far more to appear before God, and to look upon all that eternity will discover ; to give an account of our stewardship ; to find that we have not followed cunningly devised fables, which, at the bar of God, is the commencement of heaven ; or to find *too late* that the gospel is true, which, anywhere, is hell.

4. “ *One thing is needful.*” This follows from the last remark, which both discovers what it is, and illustrates its importance. It is the care of the soul. The soul must eternally exist, either in hell or heaven : God will require it, and dispose

of it ; and, therefore, to its moral condition it becomes us to attend, since by *that* its destiny will be determined. God, remember, never makes a demand which he has not furnished us with means to meet. He will demand the soul,—and he will demand it in a state of reconciliation and purity, produced by the pardon of sin and the renovation of its nature ; and for this he has provided means, in “ the blood of sprinkling ” and the sanctifying Spirit : he calls us to penitence, to faith, to prayer ; he employs every power that can arrest the attention, every instrument that can arouse the conscience, and every motive that can touch the heart ; we are surrounded by whatever is adapted to lead us to the cross of Christ, and to bring us under the influences of his grace ; and when our souls are required of us, if they are not “ fitted ” for his favourable reception, the fault will be *ours*, not God’s. I repeat, therefore, “ One thing is needful ”—an attention to what we are, and to what we must be. Whatever is neglected, let not this be forgotten. Every thing, in comparison with this, is insignificant, contemptible, mean. *The soul ! The soul !* “ What were a man profited,

should he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"—No man, indeed, ever parted with his soul at so high a price—none ever did gain the whole world, and none ever will; millions of souls have perished, and *are perishing*, for far less than the world—for an atom of it—for its very dust and refuse—the whole of which, could it be possessed, and possessed in all its pomp and magnificence, and possessed for ages, would be infinitely beneath the value of one soul! Oh! the infatuation and madness of man! "Repent—repent and be converted." "Flee from the wrath to come." "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." "Be not deceived, God is not mocked; whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap." "Because there is wrath, beware, lest he take thee away with a stroke, and then a great ransom cannot deliver thee."

5. Lastly. "*Consider the work of the Lord, and regard the operation of his hands.*" It is to this duty that the events of the present season loudly summon us. The Lord is going forth amongst us, in the greatness of his might, and the terrors of his majesty. He is attended, wherever

he appears, by the ministers of vengeance and the angel of death. "God came from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran. Before him went *the pestilence*, and burning coals went forth at his feet. He stood, and measured the earth; he beheld, and drove asunder the nations; and the everlasting mountains were scattered, and the perpetual hills did bow." "He marched through the land in indignation, and threshed the heathen in his anger." Our principal cities and towns are at this moment the seat of his judgments. It is "the work of the Lord," and it deserves to be "considered;" it is "the operation of his hand," and it becomes us "to regard" it. "The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: the grass withereth, the flower fadeth; because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, and the flower fadeth, but the word of our God shall stand for ever." To that word let us repair; let us plead and confide in its promises; let us accept the mercy it reveals through the sacrifice of the cross, and we shall

find that “the Spirit of the Lord” has other influences besides those which wither and destroy; and that it is possible to possess other feelings, in times like the present, than those either of apathy or terror. The prevalence of disease, and the ravages of death, ought, indeed, to arouse all from anything like unreflecting security. They should lead the Church to self-examination, and to increased devotedness; and the World to repentance, to humiliation, and to faith. It is impiety, or madness (another name for impiety), to suffer such events to pass without improvement, and to refuse to listen when God seems to address us in so direct a manner, and in such intelligible language. Melancholy must be the state of that man whom such things cannot awaken;—whom “the mercies of God” have only hardened, so that “the thunder of his power” is exerted in vain!

“O Lord, I have heard thy speech and was afraid;” such was the experience of the prophet, and such is the experience of those into whose habitation the prevalent disease suddenly enters, and who are hurried through scenes of suffering and death with the rapidity of a dream, but with

the consciousness of reality. "By terrible things in righteousness, thou answerest us, O God of our salvation." Our daily prayer is, "Thy will be done;" and it becomes us to remember that the inflictions of providence are only the fulfilment of our own supplications. They are both answers to prayer and inducements to pray:—they are God's method of making us what we desire to be, when we ask to be made more holy and spiritual—more dead to earth and alive to heaven; and they are his method of urging us to become what he desires—of forcing us to the mercy-seat with greater fervency, and leading us to glorify him with greater zeal. Nor are the severest trials without their immediate advantages; if they acquaint us more intimately with "the bitterness of the heart," they also acquaint us with the resources of religion; "tribulation worketh patience; patience, experience; (experience of God's gracious support;) and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in the heart, through the Holy Spirit given unto us. "No affliction, for the present, seemeth to be joyous but grievous; nevertheless,

afterwards it worketh the peaceable fruits of righteousness, to them that are exercised thereby." "God chastens us for our profit, that we may be made partakers of his holiness."

I need not inform you of the solemn event which has given rise to this discourse; which suggested the text, and furnished the illustrations. You are acquainted with the fact, and I am not disposed to enter minutely into particular circumstances. We entertain a pleasing confidence of the sincere piety of the excellent individual, who, a few days ago, was so suddenly removed from the domestic circle, and from the engagements and duties of the visible church. It is not, however, my intention to speak of her. My business is with you. It is permitted to us in private, to record the virtues, and embalm the memory of the dead, but admonition and warning belong to the living. It is for each of us to learn the lesson which the recent affecting providence conveys. You have all sympathized with those that have been bereaved; your sympathy has been highly valued, and gratefully felt; the best return that can be made, is for us to beseech you to turn

your thoughts upon yourselves,—to be no longer satisfied with low degrees of Christian attainment, or no longer to continue to procrastinate in the matter of your salvation. “To-day if ye will hear God’s voice, harden not your hearts.” Seek the salvation of your soul; “flee to the hope set before you in the gospel;” have recourse, by faith, to the “fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness,” that you may be “washed, and justified, and sanctified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God;” then, at what hour, or in what form, “trouble” may come—whether at “even-tide,” at “cock-crowing, or in the morning”—whether your last illness be short or protracted, violent or calm, all this will be a matter of comparative indifference; all will be well, for “all things will be yours;—whether life or death, or things present, or things to come; all will be yours, for you will be Christ’s, and Christ is God’s.”

“And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified.” “May He who is able

to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy ;” “ He, who brought again from the dead the Lord Jesus Christ, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,—may he make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory, for ever, and ever.” Amen.

THE END.





